

## News Release

# Crops College to Focus on On-Farm Biodiesel Use and Corn, Alfalfa and Sunflower Production Issues on Dec. 19, 2006, at U of M Crookston

By Elizabeth Tollefson on Thursday, November 16, 2006

CROOKSTON, MN (November 15, 2006) – On-farm biodiesel production, varietal seed selection, fertilizer and pest management and crop economics and production are all part of Crops College 2006 scheduled for Tues., Dec. 19, 2006, at the University of Minnesota Crookston (UMC).

Growers interested in the latest on corn, alfalfa/forage and sunflower production, including marketing, storage and handling, as well as what's happening on the biodiesel front, should sign up for the one-day college to be held from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. Check in at the Student Center on campus, 2900 University Avenue, Crookston, Minn.

Seating is limited, especially in the lab sessions, and pre-registration is strongly encouraged. Early registration by December 12 costs \$40. Registration at the door is \$50. Lunch is included. University of Minnesota students are invited to attend free of charge. Registration forms and program details are posted online or call 218-281-8027 for more info.

"This type of educational program has been popular in the past, since it includes both lectures and hands-on lab experiences," says Crops College Co-chair Char Hollingsworth, U of M plant pathologist. "Participants will have the opportunity to examine plants at different points of development and learn about the appropriate management activities that go on at the various growth stages." Crops are already being grown to get ready for the Crops College classes.

A special focus on biodiesel production and engine performance begins with the keynote address: "Food or Fuel: Should it Matter to Farmers?" presented by Mike Hergert, farm broadcaster with the Red River Farm Network. Sessions throughout the day will examine biodiesel production, utilization and the economics of on-farm manufacturing.

Farm Business and Production Management Instructor Kim Odden from Wisconsin Indianhead Technical College will be bringing on-farm equipment that runs on and produces biodiesel for demonstration and examination. Participants will get to talk with individuals who have experience using the equipment on their own farm and producing biodiesel. The pros and cons of being a biodiesel producer will also be discussed. Sessions will also show how to produce biodiesel.

Some of the other 20 different lecture and lab topics include corn genetics and hybrid selection, forage crop fertility and harvest management and sunflower weed management. Regional experts from educational institutions, government agencies and businesses will be on hand to answer questions and help agricultural producers get ready for the next growing season.

The Crops College is a collaboration of the University of Minnesota Extension Service; the University of Minnesota Crookston; the Northwest Research and Outreach Center; the College of Food, Agricultural and Natural Sciences; and commodity groups. The college is sponsored by the U of M Northwest Regional Sustainable Development Partnership and Northwest Clean Energy Resource Team.

The University of Minnesota Crookston (UMC) delivers more than 24 different undergraduate degree programs, including online options, in agriculture; arts, humanities and social sciences; business; math, science and technology; and natural resources. UMC is dedicated to helping students and the region aim higher, reach further and dream big dreams. To learn more, visit [www.UMCrookston.edu](http://www.UMCrookston.edu).

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2900 University Ave., Crookston, MN 56716  
800-862-6466 | 218-281-6510 | [umcinfo@umn.edu](mailto:umcinfo@umn.edu)

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